

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10 /100 W
----- 109604 /42

P R 131337Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8677
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 11-13

1. THE TIMES (MONDAY) SEES THE GENEVA TALKS AS HAVING FAILED. THE OTHER PAPERS SEE THE BREAKDOWN AS AN ADJOURNMENT. THERE IS FURTHER SPECULATION ON THE EXTENT OF THE EXPECTED BRITISH COMMITMENT, AND A SUGGESTION THAT CARTER IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE THE KISSINGER RHODESIA POLICY.

2. TIMES EDITORIAL: "IF THE CONFERENCE, ON RESUMPTION, IS TO PRODUCE A SOLUTION BINDING ON ALL PARTIES, IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE UNITED STATES STILL TO PLAY A WEIGHTY PART. FOR THERE IS FORCE IN MR. IAN SMITH'S CONTENTION THAT AFTER SEVEN WEEKS OF DISCUSSION--WHICH THE AFRICANS COMPLAIN HAS BEEN LEISURELY--THE SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH MR. SMITH HAVE NOT EVEN BEGUN. THE WAY MR. SMITH PUT IT, OF COURSE, WAS THAT DISCUSSIONS ON THE

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KISSINGER PLAN HAVE NOT BEGUN. DR.

KISSINGER HAS CLARIFIED THE POSITION OF THE PLAN TO THE EXTENT OF SAYING THAT IT WAS ALWAYS INTENDED AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION, AND BY IMPLICATION COULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS ANYTHING ELSE, AS HE HAD NOT SEEN ALL THE BLACK LEADERS NOW AT GENEVA. MR. SMITH INSISTS THAT IT IS STILL A CONTRACTUAL TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT PACKAGE, AND IMPLIES THAT IF HE HAD THOUGHT OTHERWISE, HE WOULD NOT HAVE TOLD THE RHODESIANS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED IT.... THE ONLY POWER CAPABLE OF PUTTING THE NECESSARY PRESSURE ON MR. VORSTER IN TURN IS, AS WE HAVE ALL SEEN, THE UNITED STATES. IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT BECAUSE DR. KISSINGER IS RETIRING FROM OFFICE THAT THE POLICY WHICH HE INITIATED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FROM THE ONSET OF THE ANGOLA CRISIS WILL BE ABANDONED. WHATEVER THE LIMITATIONS OR INEXPERIENCE OF THE UNTRIED TEAM ENTERING THE STATE DEPARTMENT, THERE IS EVERY REASON TO THINK MR. CARTER WILL PURSUE EXACTLY THE SAME POLICY--CONCEIVABLY A SOMEWHAT TOUGHER ONE."

3. TIMES LEAD STORY BY DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT DAVID SPANIER IN GENEVA: "BRITAIN WILL MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO LAUNCH A NEW RHODESIA CONFERENCE EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR. THE PRESENT EXERCISE IN GENEVA HAS FAILED IN THE OPINION OF BOTH THE WHITES AND THE AFRICAN DELEGATES. THE BRITISH VIEW IS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME GAINS, AND THAT THE FAILURE HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETE AS TO RULE OUT ANOTHER TRY.... THE MOST LIKELY COURSE IS FOR A BRITISH MINISTER TO MAKE A TOUR OF AFRICAN CAPITALS IN JANUARY."

4. GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT JAMES MACMANUS IN GENEVA: "THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED TO ADJOURN THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE IN GENEVA EARLY THIS WEEK TO ALLOW FOR A FURTHER ROUND OF DIPLOMACY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.... DIPLOMATS IN LONDON AND GENEVA...BELIEVE THAT THE ONLY HOPE OF RESCUING THE CONFERENCE FROM STALEMATE IS TO REACTIVATE THE POLITICAL PRESSURES THAT BROUGHT THE TWO SIDES TOGETHER. THESE SOURCES FEEL THAT UNLESS SOUTH AFRICA IS PERSUADED TO FORFEIT FURTHER CONCESSIONS FROM THE SALISBURY REGIME, THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF A RECONVENED CONFERENCE ESTABLISHING AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT."

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5. DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT DAVIE ADAMSON IN GENEVA: "AN URGENT ATTEMPT TO BUILD A NEW NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK FOR THE RHODESIA TALKS WAS UNDER WAY LAST NIGHT FOLLOWING APPARENT RECOGNITION BY BRITAIN AND AMERICA THAT THE CONFERENCE HAD NO CHANCE OF SUCCESS UNDER THE EXISTING TERMS OF REFERENCE.... FIRM PROPOSALS FOR A DIRECT BRITISH ROLE IN THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL BE MADE BEFORE LONG, PROVIDED IT IS ACCEPTED IN

PRINCIPLE BY ALL SIDES AT THE GENEVA TALKS."

6. OBSERVER (SUNDAY) CORRESPONDENTS ROBERT STEPHENS AND
ANDREW WILSON: "DR. KISSINGER'S ENUNCIATION OF ANY NEW

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INITIATIVE TO SAVE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON RHODESIA
UNDERLINES HOW FAR HIS EUROPEAN FAREWELL VISIT HAS BEEN
THE SWAN SONG OF A LAME DUCK.... BUT HIS INABILITY OR
UNWILLINGNESS TO PLAY ANY FURTHER PUBLIC ROLE OVER
RHODESIA DOES NOT RULE OUT FURTHER UNITED STATES INTER-
VENTION AFTER PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER TAKES OVER ON 20
JANUARY. NOR, THE BRITISH HOPE, DOES IT NECESSARILY MEAN
THAT EVEN BEFORE THEN AMERICAN PRESSURE WILL NOT BE
EXERTED BEHIND THE SCENES ON ALL PARTIES INVOLVED....
THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR. ANTHONY CROSLAND, REMAINS OP-
TIMISTIC THAT EVENTUALLY A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT WILL BE
ACHIEVED BECAUSE ENOUGH OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED HAVE A
VESTED INTEREST IN SETTLING BY NEGOTIATION RATHER THAN

BY WAR. HE IS STILL RELUCTANT TO GO TO THE GENEVA CONFERENCE HIMSELF: HE FEELS HIS PRESENCE WOULD BE A WASTING ASSET IF HE WERE TO BE CALLED IN EVERY TIME THE CONFERENCE RAN INTO DIFFICULTIES.... DR. KISSINGER IS UNDERSTOOD TO SHARE MR. CROSLAND'S OPTIMISM ABOUT A RHODESIAN SOLUTION. WELL INFORMED AMERICAN SOURCES BE-
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LIEVE THAT THE RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS ARE GOING BETTER THAN THEY APPEAR AND HOPE THAT A SETTLEMENT WILL BE REACHED EARLY NEXT YEAR."

7. OBSERVER CORRESPONDENT DAVID MARTIN IN GENEVA: "DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT, INCLUDING A SUBSTANTIAL BRITISH INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSITIONAL RULES, ARE BEGINNING TO EVOLVE IN GENEVA, WHERE THE DEADLOCKED CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IS ABOUT TO ADJOURN.... ACCORDING TO THE PLAN, THE PRESENT COMMANDERS OF THE RHODESIAN ARMY WOULD BE REMOVED AT THE START OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD AND REPLACED BY A BRITISH MILITARY TASK FORCE."

8. SUNDAY TELEGRAPH DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT NORMAN KIRKHAM: "I UNDERSTAND THAT ALTHOUGH WHITEHALL IS OPPOSED STRONGLY TO TRYING TO IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT OR SENDING TROOPS TO GUARANTEE A PEACEFUL HANDOVER TO MAJORITY RULE, THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA OF SENDING A REPRESENTATIVE WITH WIDE POWERS. HE WOULD BE HELPED BY A DIPLOMATIC STAFF."

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS, DEPENDENCIES, SELFDETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LONDON20088
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760458-1190
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761249/aaaabpyk.tel
Line Count: 204
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: schwenja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by schwenja>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 11-13
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006